

(c) the time by which it is proposed to be increased; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRIBALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) to (d) The rates of royalty on minerals other than coal, lignite and sand for stowing were last revised in May, 1987. The next revision was due in May, 1990. The Ministry of Mines constituted a Study Group in April, 1989 to consider the question and make appropriate recommendation to Government. The study Group submitted its recommendations to the Ministry of Mines in April, 1990.

While the recommendations of the Study Group were under consideration, the Supreme Court of India and various High Courts struck down as ultra vires of the Constitution some of the State Acts under which cess, mineral rights tax and other such levies on minerals were imposed. The Supreme Court of India in case of *M/s Orissa Cement Ltd. Vs. State of Orissa* & other finally disposed of a number of appeals filed by either State Government or other aggrieved parties in its judgement dated 4th April, 1991 holding all such levies to be beyond the competence of the State Legislatures. In view of this judgement of the Supreme Court if become necessary to re-examine the recommendations of the Study Group in the context of demands from various State Governments for compensating the loss of State revenue on account of non-levy of any cess, mineral rights tax, land tax, etc. Various State Governments were earlier levying several categories of imports including cess, mineral rights tax etc. There was also large variation in the rates of such levies from State to State. Taking these factors into consideration and also factors like to PMV of 1990, the conditions in domestic and export markets, nature of end-use of a mineral in industry, the matter has been examined in the Ministry

of Mines had detailed proposal for revision of rates of royalty on various minerals is now under active consideration of the Government.

[English]

LPG Connection in Maharashtra

2399. SHRI MORESHWAR SAVE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of applicants on the waiting list for LPG gas connections in Maharashtra, District-wise;

(b) the number of applicants on the waiting list for more than three years; and

(c) the time by which the waiting list is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR): (a) to (c). As on 1.10.1991, there were about 13.48 lakh persons on waiting list in Maharashtra. efforts are on to give LPG connections to as many applicants as early as possible.

Hydraulic Mining and Desulphurisation Plant at Bargaolai, Assam

2400. SHRI RAMESH CHAND TOMAR:
SHRICHETAN P. S. CHAUHAN

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to set up a hydraulic mining and desulphurisation plant for production of coking coal at Bargaolai, Assam with the Canadian assistance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have taken any decision to upgrade the Coal India Ltd. set up in the North East region to expedite the exploitation and mining of coking coal there;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to minimise the import of coking coal to save foreign exchange?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S.B. NYAMAGOURA): (a) and (b). Introduction of Hydraulic Mining with Coal. Washery at Baragolai Project of North Eastern Coalfields, Assam was identified as one of the Projects for development with possible Canadian assistance. A study has been undertaken by a Canadian Company under Canadian Government grant assistance in the regard which submitted its report in June, 1991. This report is being evaluated by Coal India Ltd.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. Coal India has established a Regional Institute of Central Mine Planning and Design Institute at Tura to render assistance in extraction of coal from the coalfields in Meghalaya and adjoining areas. General Manager's post at North Eastern Coalfields has been filled up. The staff at Gowahati and Meghalaya is being augmented.

(e) Following steps are being taken to increase the production of coking coal to minimise import requirements:-

1. Coking Coal Projects are receiving highest priority in investment.
2. The washed coking coal (including direct feed) production is proposed to increase from 10.0 million tonnes

during 1991-92 to 13.97 million tonnes in 1996-97, the terminal year of the VIII Five Year Plan.

3. Modifications of existing Washeries and construction of new washeries to augment the washed coking coal availability are being carried out.
4. Explorations to identify the new sources of coking coal are being made.
5. The production of coking coal is being monitored at the highest level in the Government.

Vacancies in ICAR

2401. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the post of the Director general, ICAR and Chiefs of some of the ICAR institutions are lying vacant;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which these posts are likely to be filled-up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K.C. LENKA): (a) Sir, The posts of Director in some of the ICAR institutes are lying vacant.

(b) Due to retirement, resignation, transfer etc.

(c) As soon as the recruitment process is completed.

Allocation for Agricultural Research and Education

2402. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state: